

XLIV.—*Remarks on some Species of Oliva recently described by Mr. Frederick P. Marrat.* By T. GRAHAM PONTON, F.Z.S.

IN the 'Annals,' ser. 3. vol. xx. p. 213, Mr. Marrat published descriptions of twelve new species of *Oliva*. With your permission I would beg to make a few remarks upon some of them.

The genus *Oliva* is one of the most interesting to the student of variation. Colour, which has been so frequently taken as a guide in the determination of specific differences in shells, here almost completely fails. This has been well shown in the fine monograph of the genus published by the late Mr. L. Reeve; and I cannot help thinking that Mr. Marrat has somewhat lost sight of the fact.

For example, the *Oliva violacea* described by him is almost identical with some specimens of *Oliva reticularis*, from Mazatlan, in the Museum of the Bristol Philosophical Institution. These shells have the pale zigzag lines and semilunar dots described by Mr. Marrat. The base of the columella is stained with violet, which, by the way, is a marked character of *O. reticularis*. The interior of the aperture is pale bluish—thus making a decided approach to Mr. Marrat's shell. In fact I cannot help thinking that *O. violacea* is nearer the typical form of *O. reticularis* than some Californian examples of the species in our Museum, which are of a deep brown, marbled with a darker colour; the columella in these examples is of a full, rich brown tint. Similar specimens are figured in Reeve's monograph.

*Oliva jamaicensis*, Marrat.—This shell, Mr. Marrat remarks, is intermediate between *O. splendidula* and *O. reticularis*. This observation goes far to prove that the opinion entertained by many conchologists respecting the identity of the two species mentioned is a correct one. I cannot distinguish Mr. Marrat's shell from varieties of *O. reticularis* with a depressed spire—a feature which is not uncommon even in very typical forms of the species.

*Oliva polita*, Marrat.—I cannot help thinking this shell is merely a variety of *O. jaspidea*, which varies much both in form and colour: certainly varieties of that species in our Museum answer well to Mr. Marrat's description.

*Oliva piperata*, Marrat.—Mr. Marrat remarks that this shell is allied to *O. conoidalis*, Lam. The *O. conoidalis* of Lamarck is simply a variety of *O. jaspidea*. Is not Mr. Marrat's shell the same?

*Oliva faba*, Marrat.—This shell, Mr. Marrat observes, is

intermediate between *O. todesina*, Duclos, and *O. ispidula*. The *O. todesina* is merely a variety of *O. carneola*, Lamarck, which very variable shell presents every form intermediate between the typical broadly angulated carnelian-coloured specimens and the narrow, oblong, cylindrical, dull-purple, reticulated ones. Some of these varieties are well figured by Reeve; and Mr. Marrat's description of *O. faba* answers well to some of them and to others I have seen.

*Oliva blanda*, Marrat.—I am much disposed to think that this is but a variety of *O. ispidula*. The more or less swollen condition of the columellar lip is a very variable character: specimens of the white variety of *O. ispidula* present it in a marked degree.

*Oliva cylindrica*, Marrat.—The description of this shell answers well to the var.  $\alpha$  of *O. irisans* figured by Reeve. *O. irisans* is an exceedingly variable shell, and its forms have even not yet been completely worked out.

*Oliva pallida*, Marrat.—I believe this to be a variety of *O. scripta*, which species is mainly distinguished from some varieties of *O. literata* and *O. reticularis*, which closely resemble it, by its short spire and pale aperture.

*Oliva oblonga*, Marrat.—Is not this the shell figured by Reeve under the name of *O. fusiformis*?

*Oliva truncata*, Marrat.—I cannot help thinking this is merely a variety of *O. polypasta*, which, in its turn, I am much disposed to believe is merely a variety of *O. reticularis*, and that it is connected with that species by numerous indefinable variations. The mere circumstance of locality would not in itself be any evidence of specific distinctness. The Olives present many remarkable anomalies in this respect: for example, *O. cruenta* inhabits the Philippines, Zanzibar, Australia, and the Society Islands—widely diverse localities. *O. Duclosi* is found at the Philippines and at the Society Islands. *O. reticularis* occurs in California and in the West Indies—all strangely different habitats.

With respect to Mr. Marrat's other two species, viz. *O. ornata* and *O. similis*, I will say nothing, sufficient evidence being wanting; but I must confess to being somewhat suspicious as to their specific value.

Clifton, near Bristol,  
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